

**What is claimed is:**

1. An address inquiry system for informing an inquirer of a new address of a changer based on an old address of the changer via an Internet, comprising:

5 a data base relationally storing at least the old address, the new address, and an address disclosing condition capable of setting a condition whereby the changer judges whether to give permission to disclose the new address;

10 a means for searching the new address corresponding to the old address and the address disclosing condition from the data base when the inquirer sends an inquiry including the old address;

15 a means for making the changer confirm whether the new address is disclosed when the address disclosing condition in searching includes the set condition; and

a means for informing the inquirer of the new address when the changer permits the disclosure of the new address.

20 2. The address inquiry system as set forth in claim 1, wherein the data base includes a list of specific inquirers who are refused inquiries about the new address,

25 the system, further comprising: a means for refusing an inquiry from the inquirer included in the list.

3. The address inquiry system as set forth in claim 1,

wherein the data base relationally stores a plurality of old addresses and one new address.

4. The address inquiry system as set forth in claim 3,

wherein the address disclosing condition is  
5 allowed to be set on each of the plurality of old addresses in the data base.

5. The address inquiry system as set forth in claim 1,

wherein the old address and the new address each include at least one sort out of an electronic mail  
10 address, a home page address, a telephone number, an address, and a residence.

6. The address inquiry system as set forth in claim 5, further comprising:

a means for informing the inquirer of the new  
15 address of a predetermined sort according to the sort of the old address included in the inquiry sent from the inquirer.

7. The address inquiry system as set forth in claim 1,

wherein the inquiry sent from the inquirer  
20 includes a message text sent from the inquirer to the changer,

the system, further comprising:

a means for sending the message text to make the changer confirm whether the new address is disclosed  
25 according to the selection of the changer.

8. A system for making an inquiry about an address, comprising:

5           a disclosure judging means for judging whether to  
disclose the address to the inquirer based on the  
address disclosing condition when the inquirer makes an  
inquiry about the address of the registrant; and

9. The system as set forth in claim 8,  
wherein the address data base stores one, or two  
15 or more old addresses of the registrant, and

10. The system as set forth in claim 9,  
wherein the address data base stores attribute  
information about the registrant, and

25            wherein the disclosure judging means makes the  
inquirer select a registrant about whose address an  
inquiry is made by presenting at least a part of the

attribute information about a plurality of registrants when the plurality of registrants are searched with respect to the old address.

11. The system as set forth in claim 8,

5            wherein the disclosing condition includes information about inquirers to whom the address is disclosed or not disclosed, and

             wherein the disclosure judging means includes a confirming means for making the registrant confirm  
10            whether the address is disclosed to the inquirer when the inquirer who inquires about the address is not registered in the inquirers in the disclosing condition.

12. The system as set forth in claim 11,

             wherein the information about the inquirers to  
15            whom the address is disclosed or not disclosed includes information that the address is disclosed or not disclosed to all of the inquirers or only a part thereof.

13. The system as set forth in claim 11,

20            wherein the confirming means informs the registrant of the attribute information about the inquirer at the time of confirmation.

14. The system as set forth in claim 13,

             wherein the attribute information includes a  
25            profile of the inquirer.

15. The system as set forth in claim 13, further comprising:

an inquirer attribute information storing means  
for previously storing the attribute information about  
the inquirer; and

an inquirer attribute information registering  
5 means for accepting registration of the attribute  
information from the inquirer when the attribute  
information of the inquirer is not stored by the  
inquirer attribute information storing means.

16. The system as set forth in claim 11,  
10 wherein the confirming means allows a part or all  
of a message to the registrant received from the  
inquirer to be sent to the registrant.

17. The system as set forth in claim 11,  
15 wherein the confirming means includes a disclosing  
condition registering means for receiving a  
confirmation result from the registrant and registering  
the inquirer in the disclosing condition as an inquirer  
to whom the address is disclosed or not disclosed.

18. The system as set forth in claim 11,  
20 wherein the disclosure judging means refuses to  
disclose the address to the inquirer when a response to  
a confirmation requested by the confirming means is not  
obtained from the registrant before a predetermined  
deadline.

25 19. The system as set forth in claim 8, further  
comprising:

a means for informing the registrant that the

inquirer made the inquiry about the address.

20. The system as set forth in claim 8,  
wherein the address is an electronic mail address.

21. The system as set forth in claim 8,  
5 wherein the address is a home page address.

22. The system as set forth in claim 8,  
wherein the address is a telephone number or an  
address/residence.

23 A computer software product for instructing a  
10 computer system to inquire of a system for making an  
inquiry about an address, about an address, comprising:  
a storage medium; and

an inquiry instructing means, stored in the  
storage medium and started based on the return of an  
15 electronic mail because its destination is unknown, for  
instructing the computer system to inquire of the  
system for making the inquiry about the address about  
an electronic mail address of an addressee of the  
electronic mail.

24 A computer software product for instructing a  
20 computer system to inquire of a system for making an  
inquiry about an address, about an address, comprising:  
a storage medium; and

an inquiry instructing means, stored in the  
25 storage medium and started based on the impossibility  
of display of a home page because its destination is  
unknown, for instructing the computer system to inquire

of the system for making the inquiry, about the address about an address of the home page.

25. The computer software product as set forth in claim 24, further comprising:

5           a home page displaying means for instructing the computer system to display the home page concerned in the address based on the disclosure of the address by the system for inquiring about the address.

10          26    A method for inquiring about an address of a registrant, comprising:

            an inquiry receiving step of receiving an inquiry about the address of the registrant from an inquirer;

            a registration judging step of judging whether the registrant is registered in an address data base;

15           a disclosure judging step of judging whether the address is disclosed to the inquirer based on a predetermined disclosing condition when the registrant is registered in the address data base; and

20           an address disclosing step of disclosing the address of the registrant to the inquirer if it is judged that the address is disclosed in the disclosure judging step.

27. The method as set forth in claim 26,

25           wherein it is judged whether the registrant is registered by searching the data base with an old address of the registrant in the registration judging step.

28. The method as set forth in claim 27,

wherein the registration judging step includes a  
step of making the inquirer select a registrant whose  
address the inquirer inquires about when the old  
5 address of the registrant is registered for a plurality  
of registrants in the data base.

29. The method as set forth in claim 26,

wherein the disclosing condition includes  
information about inquirers to whom the address is  
10 disclosed or not disclosed, and

wherein the disclosure judging step includes a  
confirming step of making the registrant confirm  
whether the address is disclosed to the inquirer when  
the inquirer who inquires about the address is not  
15 registered in the inquirers in the disclosing condition.

30. The method as set forth in claim 29,

wherein attribute information about the inquirer  
is reported to the registrant in the confirming step.

31. The method as set forth in claim 30,

20 wherein the attribute information includes a  
profile of the inquirer.

32. The method as set forth in claim 26, further  
comprising:

an inquirer attribute information storing step of  
25 previously receiving and storing the attribute  
information about the inquirer.

33. The method as set forth in claim 29,



wherein a part or all of a message to the registrant received from the inquirer is allowed to be sent to the registrant in the confirming step.

34. The method as set forth in claim 29,

5            wherein the confirming step includes a disclosing condition registering step of receiving a confirmation result from the registrant and registering the inquirer in the disclosing condition as an inquirer to whom the address is disclosed or not disclosed.

10          35. The method as set forth in claim 29,

            wherein the disclosure of the address to the inquirer is refused in the disclosure judging step when a response to a confirmation requested in the confirming step is not obtained from the registrant  
15          before a predetermined deadline.

36. The method as set forth in claim 26, further comprising:

            a step of informing the registrant that the inquirer made the inquiry about the address.

20          37. The method as set forth in claim 26,

            wherein the address is an electronic mail address.

38. The method as set forth in claim 26,

            wherein the address is a home page address.

39. The method as set forth in claim 26,

25            wherein the address is a telephone number or an address/residence.

40. The method as set forth in claim 37, further

comprising:

a step of making an inquiry about the address  
based on the return of an electronic mail sent from the  
inquirer to the registrant because its destination is  
5 unknown.

41. The method as set forth in claim 38, further  
comprising:

a step of making an inquiry about the home page  
address of the registrant based on the refusal of a  
10 request for the display of a home page transmitted from  
the inquirer to the registrant because its destination  
is unknown.